

Amendments to the Specification

Page 4, line 13,

Referring again to FIG. 2, according to one aspect of the present invention, in step 56, the edges of the mask pattern in the SEM image are automatically detected using pattern recognition. The detected edges may be stored in an edge database in a standard format, such as GDSII (a standard file format for transferring/archiving to the graphic design data). In one preferred embodiment, an algorithm, referred to as a Snake Algorithm, is used to automatically detect the mask edges from the SEM image, as disclosed in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. ~~10/251,083~~ 10/251,082 entitled "Mask Defect Analysis for Both Horizontal and Vertical Processing Effects" (2513P) filed on September 20, 2002 by the present assignee and herein incorporated by reference. In an alternative embodiment, an "Adaptive SEM Edge Recognition Algorithm" may also be used to detect the edges, as disclosed in U.S. Serial No. 10/327,452, entitled "Adaptive SEM Edge Recognition Algorithm," filed on December 2002.